

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are unchanged and remain pending in the present application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Bendinelli, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,631,416; "Bendinelli"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the current Office Action, the Examiner makes no mention of Claims 2 and 3 in the same manner as discussed in the Office Action dated June 25, 2008. Applicant assumes that these claims are rejected in the same manner as the reissued Office Action dated August 14, 2008.

In the current Office Action, the Examiner provides additional arguments against remarks made in Applicant's response to the previous Office Action (e.g., "Response to Arguments"). However, Applicant respectfully disagrees. Applicant maintains that independent Claims 1, 2, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 34 are still distinguishable from Bendinelli and that the dependent claims are also distinguishable from Bendinelli at least by virtue of their dependency on these independent claims.

Item 7A of the Office Action

The Examiner presents arguments with respect to the claimed switching information. However, as can be understood from the explanations below, the present

invention has various distinctive features in addition to merely obtaining/using switching information.

Item 7B of the Office Action

Column 27, lines 27-30, of Bendinelli merely disclose that a disk image is loaded onto a communication device, such as a router, a switch, or a bridge, thereby enabling them to participate in virtual private network(s). Note that the disk image is merely an image that includes program code and information for configuring gateways (column 15, lines 8-11 of Bendinelli). Therefore, the portion of Bendinelli pointed out by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the features of the present invention; e.g., to store switching information which is used by each router apparatus positioned along a transfer path of a packet.

Item 7C of the Office Action

Column 16, lines 4-9, of Bendinelli merely discloses that a gateway is a router, a switch, or the like. In addition, column 28, lines 37-49, of Bendinelli merely disclose that: a first gateway 650 makes an internal routing table entry by providing an IP address from a network operations center 610; the first gateway 650 routes traffic associated with controlling a gateway through a TCP tunnel to the network operations center 610 and a tunnel interface module 612; and the first gateway 650 communicates directly with the tunnel interface module 612 through the TCP tunnel. The portions of Bendinelli pointed out by the Examiner neither disclose nor suggest the features of various devices of the present invention cited in item 7C of the Office Action; in

particular, to add switching information in a transfer path order to a packet, and to delete switching information used by a core router apparatus itself and then transmit a packet.

Item 7D of the Office Action

Column 27, lines 53-58, of Bendinelli merely disclose that a gateway initiates IPSec tunnels through TCP tunnels to a tunnel interface module 612. The portion of Bendinelli cited by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the features of the present invention; e.g., the feature explained with respect to Item 7B.

Item 7E of the Office Action

As done in Item 7C, the Examiner points out column 28, lines 37-49, of Bendinelli in Item 7E. However, as can be understood from the foregoing explanation with respect to Item 7C, the portion of Bendinelli pointed out by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the switching information calculation device recited in Claim 34; e.g., to obtain switching information for switching a packet at each router apparatus positioned along a transfer path of the packet within a network, that is, to obtain switching information used by the respective routers positioned along the transfer path.

Item 7F of the Office Action

Column 38, lines 23-28, of Bendinelli merely disclose that an originating gateway and a destination gateway exchange information through a tunnel. The portion of Bendinelli pointed out by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the relevant

feature of the present invention; i.e., a core router apparatus that receives and transfers a packet to which the switching information has been affixed for switching the packet.

Item 7G of the Office Action

Column 30, lines 22-29, of Bendinelli merely discloses the following: a network operations center receives monitoring information, such as the number of active tunnels, up/down times for each tunnel, and ping time between tunnels, from a first gateway 660; and when a control path is activated, a first gateway 650 notifies each of the other gateways that are listed on its partner list. The portion of Bendinelli cited by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the relevant feature of the present invention; i.e., deleting switching information which has been used.

Item 3 of the Office Action

In Item 3, page 2, penultimate line of the Office Action, with respect to the switching information calculation device of the edge router apparatus of the present invention, the Examiner points out column 24, lines 43-65, of Bendinelli, instead of column 13, lines 45-55, of Bendinelli as in the previous Office Action. However, column 24, lines 43-65, of Bendinelli merely disclose that: switches 680 switch information or traffic between subsystems 611-616 of a network operations center 610; a user, such as an administrator, registers a gateway with the network operations center 610; and a computer of the user connects to a public web server 611 of the network operations center 610 to provide registration information to the public web server 611. The portion of Bendinelli pointed out by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests the features of

the switching information calculation device of the edge router apparatus of the present invention; in particular, to obtain switching information for switching a packet in each router apparatus positioned along a transfer path in a network.

Concluding Remarks

Although the Examiner cites various portions of Bendinelli, the cited excerpts neither disclose nor suggest the features recited in the independent claims (see below). Moreover, as already pointed out in the response to the previous Office Action, the Examiner deals with independent Claim 1 on the same basis as independent Claims 30 and 33, and deals with independent Claim 2 on the same basis as independent Claims 29 and 34. However, as can also be understood from the distinctive features of the respective independent claims shown below, Claims 1 and 2 include features different from those of Claims 29, 30, 33, and 34. Therefore, the Examiner's arguments are improper and incomplete. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically point out the portions of Bendinelli with respect to both independent Claims 1 and 2.

Independent Claim 1

The invention as recited in Claim 1 receives packets that comply with dissimilar communication protocols, extracts content data included in the received packets, and selects a communication line corresponding to the extracted content based on stored line selection information from among communication lines that comply with dissimilar communication protocols.

Independent Claim 2

The invention as recited in Claim 2 receives packets that comply with dissimilar communication protocols, extracts destination information, and selects a communication line corresponding to the extracted destination information based on stored destination selection information from among communication lines that comply with dissimilar communication protocols. Moreover, when a plurality of communication lines have been selected, the invention as recited in Claim 2 extracts content data included in the packets, and selects a communication line corresponding to the extracted content data based on stored line selection information from among the communication lines.

Independent Claim 29 and Edge Router Apparatus of Independent Claim 33

The invention as recited in claims 29 and 33 obtains switching information for switching a packet received from the outside of a network at each router apparatus positioned along a transfer path within the network, and affixes to the received packet the obtained switching information in a transfer path order.

Independent Claim 30 and Edge Router Apparatus of Independent Claim 34

The invention as recited in claims 30 and 34 obtains switching information for switching a packet received from another network at each router apparatus positioned along a transfer path within a network, and affixes to the received packet the obtained switching information in a transfer path order.

Independent Claim 32 and Core Router Apparatuses of Independent Claims 33 and 34

The invention as recited in claims 32-34 deletes switching information used by a core router apparatus itself from switching information affixed to a received packet, and then transmits the packet.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

Gregory A. Stebbs
Reg. No. 28,764

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

GAS/dec

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